

COMICO



JONNY QUEST™

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CDC

"GUNS
FOR THE
LAUGHING
MAN"

Dave
Stevens
1985



This issue, we jump right back into the adventure and intrigue that *Jonny Quest* is known for, while at the same time delving a little more deeply into the character and background of old chisel-chinned Race Bannon — the handsome, stalwart hero who's supposed to set every gal's heart aflutter.

Well . . . confidentially, he's not *my* type — but then, I'm no Jezebel Jade either!

"Guns for the Laughing Man" is brought to you courtesy of **Bill Loebs** (natch!) and the fine folks at Insight Studios. And if you're wondering why we left **Mark Wheatley** and

Marc Hempel out of our "Creator Profiles" in *JONNY QUEST* #1, despite their terrific pin-up that issue, the reason is that we knew we'd be featuring them here, along with **Kathryn Mayer**, as this issue's artistic team.

Read on . . .

— **Diana Schutz**

CREATOR PROFILES

MARC HEMPEL

After publishing early work in such fanzines as *RBCC* and underground comix including *BOP* and *DR. WIRTHAM'S COMIX AND STORIES*, Marc Hempel moved to Baltimore and joined forces with Mark Wheatley. Since then, his style has undergone a series of evolutionary transitions and his art and stories have appeared in *QUESTAR*, *EPIC ILLUSTRATED*, *HEAVY METAL*, *ALIEN ENCOUNTERS*, *ECLIPSE*, and *MARVEL FANFARE*, among others. His collaborations with Wheatley include the critically acclaimed *MARS* series, *BE AN INTERGALACTIC SPY* (a Bantam paperback series), and the recent *BLOOD OF THE INNOCENT*.

MARK WHEATLEY

In addition to sharing Insight Studios with Marc Hempel, Mark Wheatley

has built his own impressive list of credits, with his art appearing in such national publications as *TV GUIDE*, *HEAVY METAL*, *EPIC ILLUSTRATED*, and *ROCK MAGAZINE*. A recent story published in *TALES OF TERROR* has been optioned for production by a film company, and in his off-hours he composes electronic music scores. Mark has also added the coloring of various Fantagraphics books to his busy schedule.

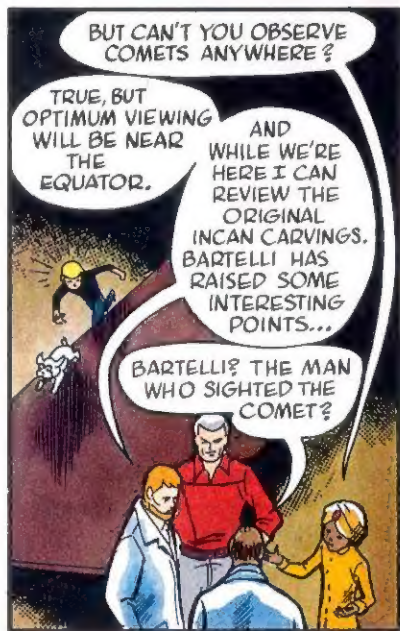
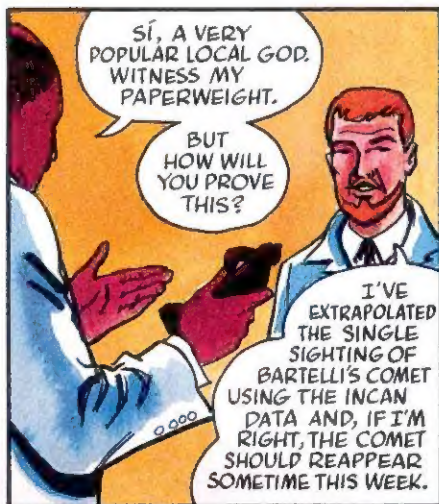
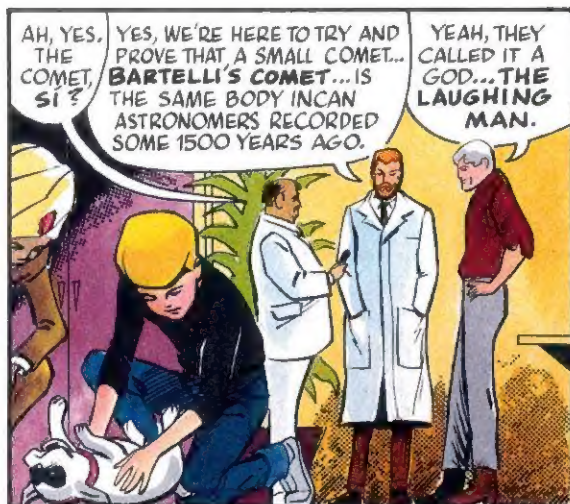
KATHRYN MAYER

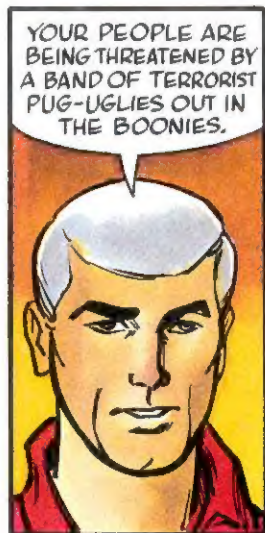
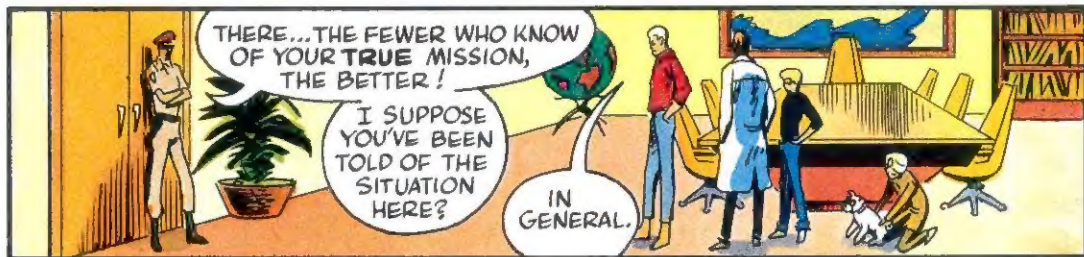
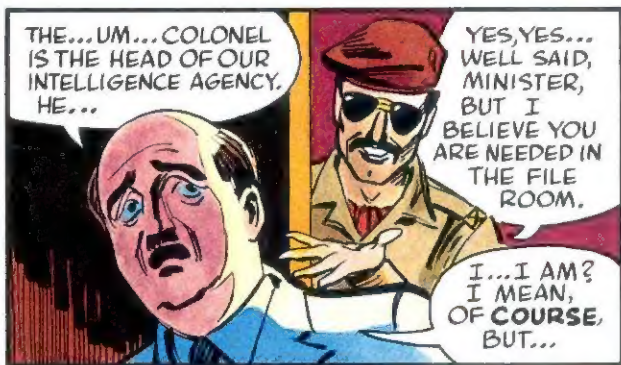
Having earned the respect of the industry for her considerable coloring skills, Kathryn Mayer has contributed colors and lettering to most of Wheatley and Hempel's collaborations, the most recent being *BLOOD OF THE INNOCENT*. Her main interest, however, lies in costuming, for which she has won numerous awards. Currently, she is working

with Mark Wheatley in the coloring of *DALGODA* and *THE DOOMSDAY SQUAD* for Fantagraphics.

DAVE STEVENS

By the time *THE ROCKETEER* introduced Dave Stevens to comicdom and established him as one of the industry's brightest stars, this "overnight sensation" had been a working artist for seven years. After breaking into the business at the age of 19 as Russ Manning's assistant, Stevens worked in syndicated strips, animation, and film (including drawing storyboards for a sequence in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*). Since the debut of *THE ROCKETEER*, some of Stevens' other comic credits include covers and/or stories for *ALIEN WORLDS*, *CROSSFIRE*, *DNAGENTS*, and *TRUE LOVE*—not to mention Dave's upcoming cover for *JONNY QUEST* #5!







THAT
IDIOT!

"THE
MIDAS TOUCH"?
NO, IT CAN'T
BE!



RACER!

WILD
JIM!



GUYS, THIS
IS WILD JIM
CANNON. WE
WERE PALS
BACK AT
STATE U.

YEP.
THEY
CALLED US
"CANNON AND
BANNON,
LUNATICS
FOR HIRE."

BANNON
AND
CANNON,
YOU GLORY
HOUND!

CANNON!



YOU IMBECILE!
YOU DRUNKEN FOOL!
LOOK AT WHAT YOU
HAVE DONE!

DRUNKEN
BUM! THIS
TIME I WILL
THROW THE
BOOK AT YOU!



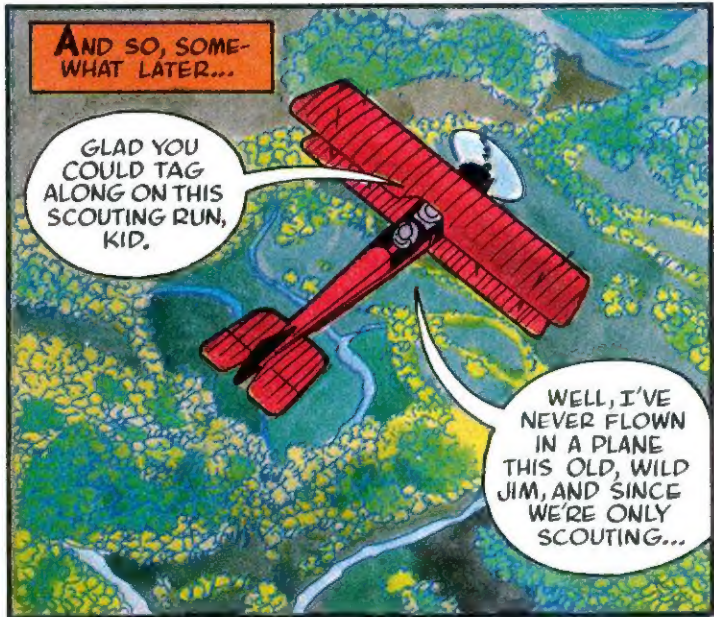
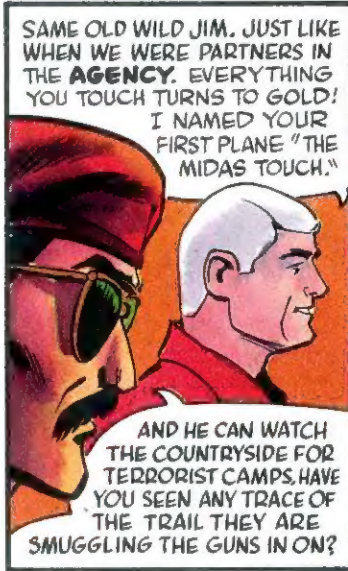
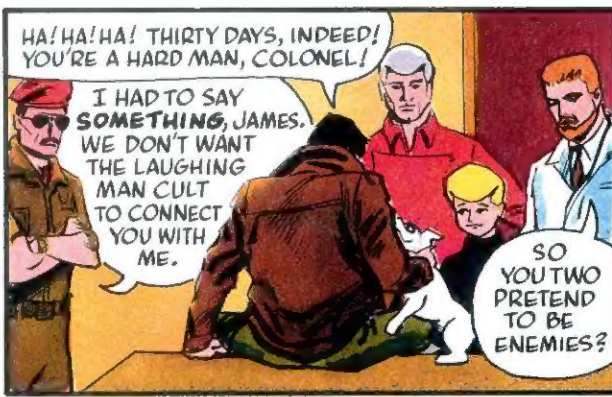
AW, COLONEL,
HONEY... DIDN'T
MEAN NO HARM.
JUS' SCARED
A FEW
CHICKENS!

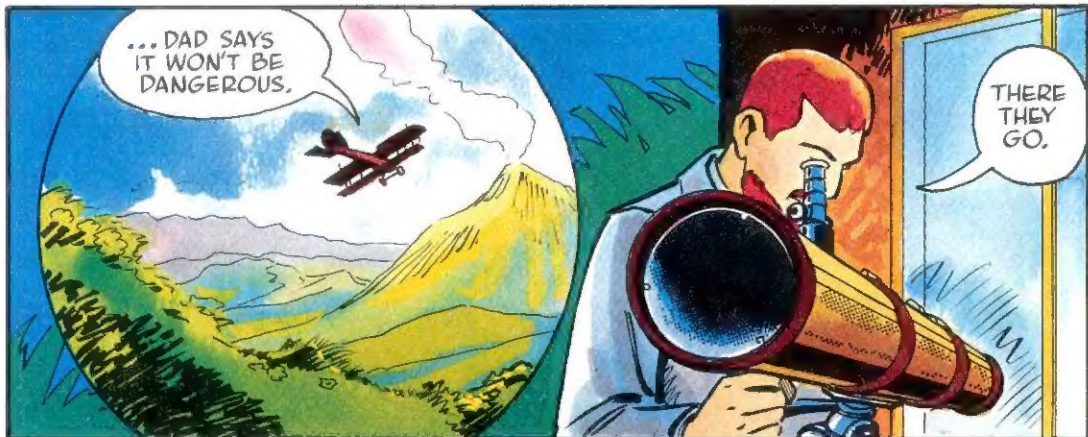
THIS IS THE LAST
STRAW. LAUGH
OFF THIRTY DAYS
IN JAIL!

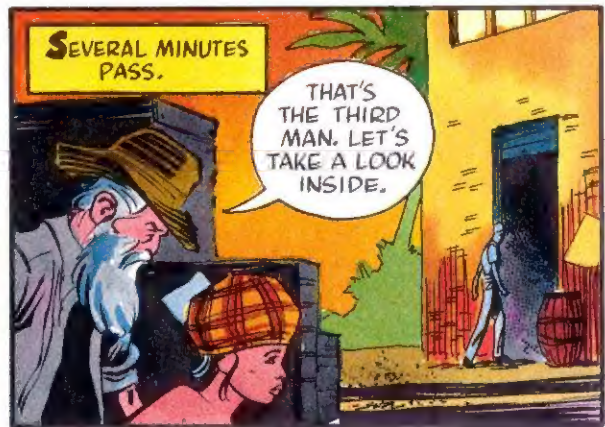
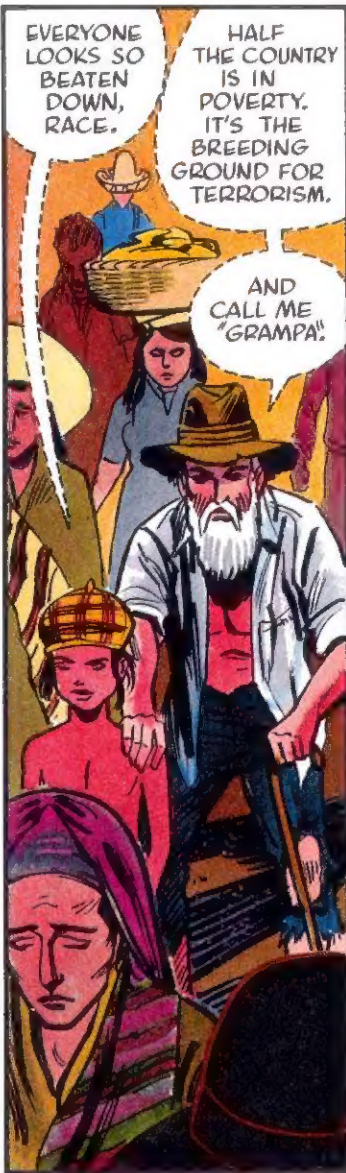
NOW,
WAIT
A
MINUTE!

I DON'T GET IT,
HADJI. WILD
JIM DIDN'T LOOK
DRUNK TO
ME.

I THINK I
UNDERSTAND,
JONNY.









LOOK, RACE. IF YOU GIVE ME A BOOST, I THINK I CAN MAKE IT.

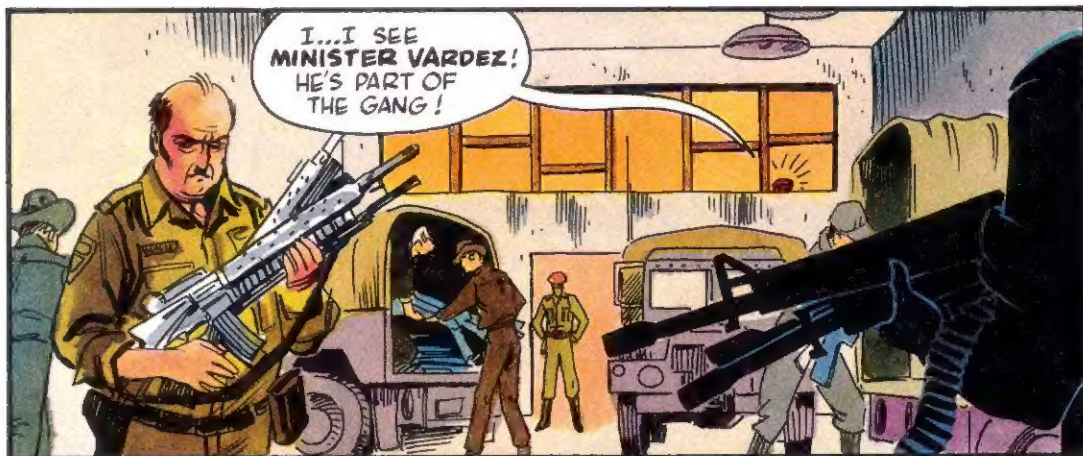


THERE YOU GO, PAL. ~~OOOF!~~ CAN'T YOU FLOAT FOR THIS SORT OF THING?



SOMETIMES, BUT THIS IS EASIER.

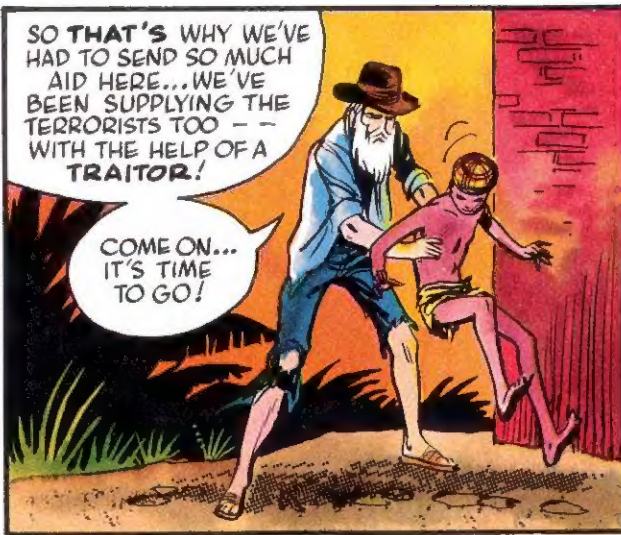
WHAT DO YOU SEE?



I...I SEE MINISTER VARDEZ! HE'S PART OF THE GANG!

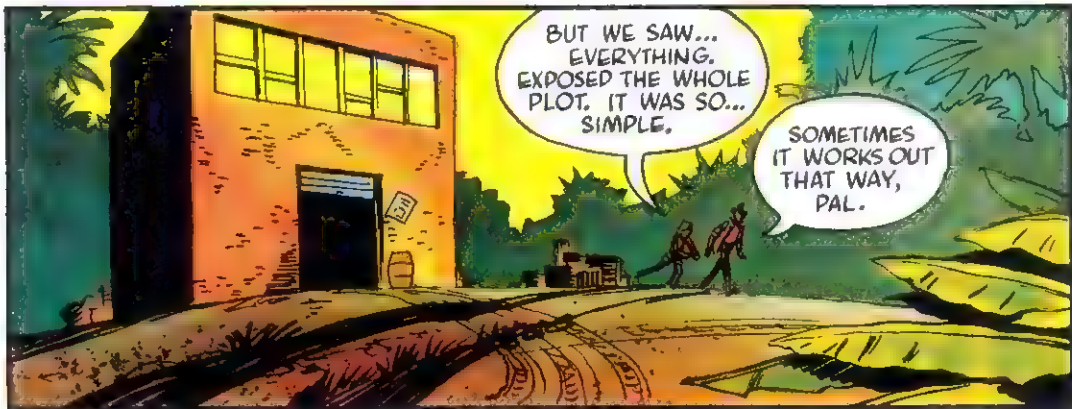


AND THE RIFLES... THEY HAVE U.S. MARKINGS ON THEM.



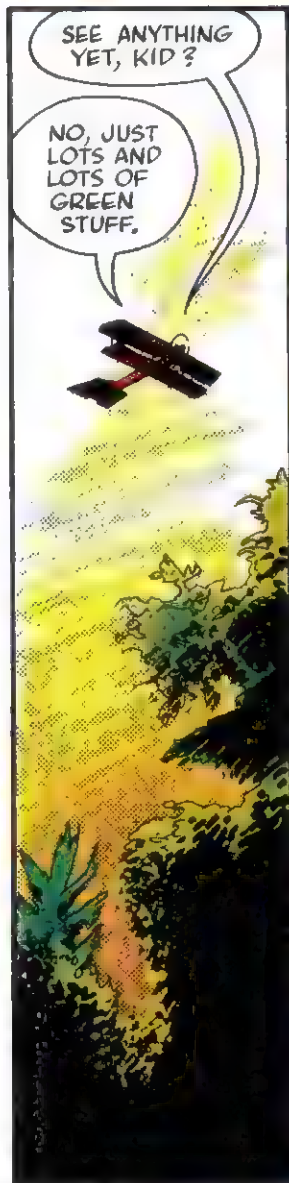
SO THAT'S WHY WE'VE HAD TO SEND SO MUCH AID HERE... WE'VE BEEN SUPPLYING THE TERRORISTS TOO -- WITH THE HELP OF A TRAITOR!

COME ON... IT'S TIME TO GO!



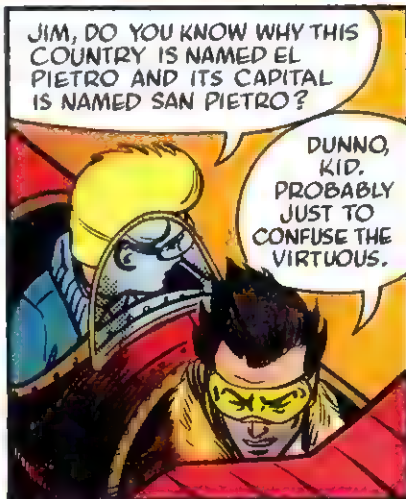
BUT WE SAW...
EVERYTHING.
EXPOSED THE WHOLE
PLOT. IT WAS SO...
SIMPLE.

SOMETIMES
IT WORKS OUT
THAT WAY,
PAL.



SEE ANYTHING
YET, KID?

NO, JUST
LOTS AND
LOTS OF
GREEN
STUFF.

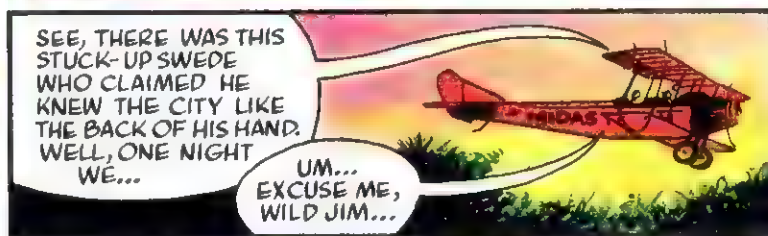


JIM, DO YOU KNOW WHY THIS
COUNTRY IS NAMED EL
PIETRO AND ITS CAPITAL
IS NAMED SAN PIETRO?

DUNNO,
KID.
PROBABLY
JUST TO
CONFUSE THE
VIRTUOUS.

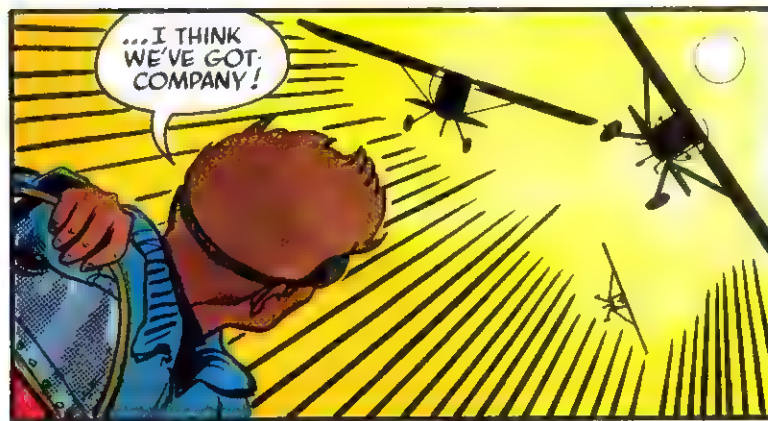


REMINDS ME
OF THE TIME RACER
AND I RE-LETTERED
ALL THE STREET SIGNS
IN CASABLANCA.

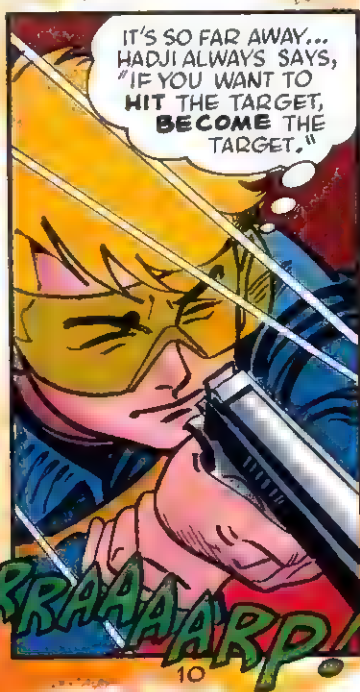
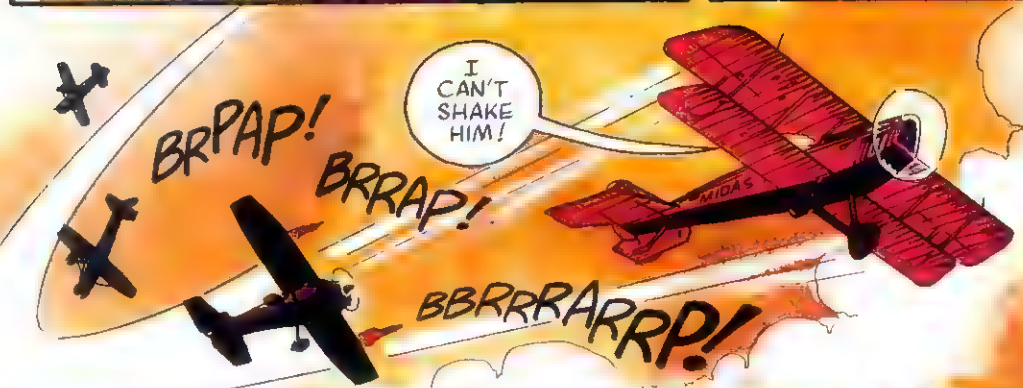
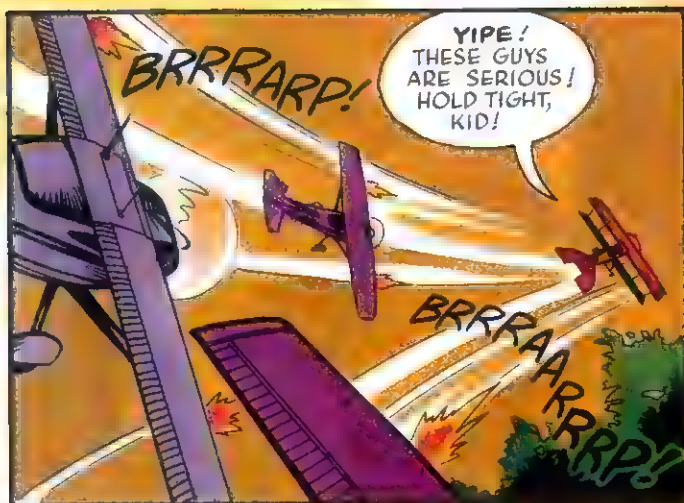


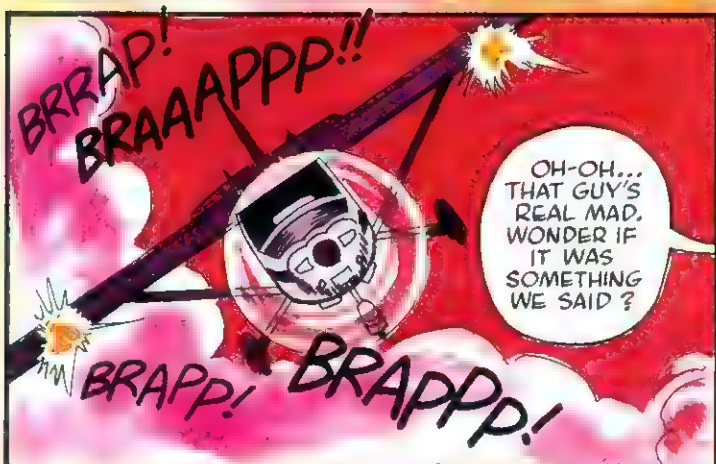
SEE, THERE WAS THIS
STUCK-UP SWED
WHO CLAIMED HE
KNEW THE CITY LIKE
THE BACK OF HIS HAND.
WELL, ONE NIGHT
WE...

UM...
EXCUSE ME,
WILD JIM...



...I THINK
WE'VE GOT
COMPANY!





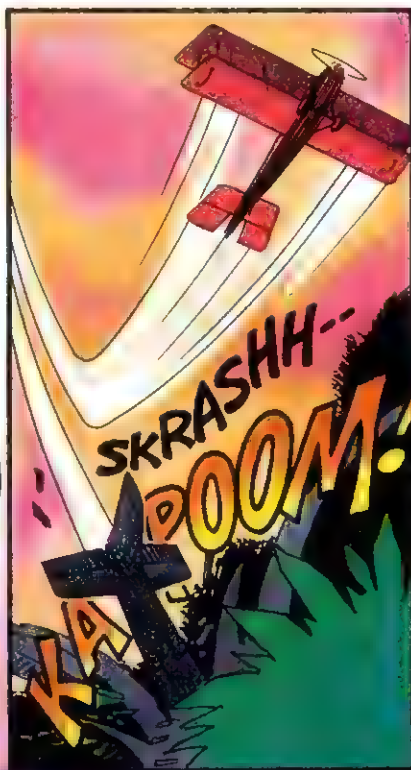


BRAP!

BRAP!

HERE'S WHERE WE LOOK REAL CUTE, IF WE DON'T TEAR APART!

OH, WELL... YOU ONLY DIE ONCE!



SKRASHH--
DOOM!

KA



I DON'T SEE ANY MORE OF THEM.

JUST AS WELL. I THINK WE JUST USED UP ABOUT TWELVE YEARS' WORTH OF LUCK!

NOW, LET'S SEE WHAT THEY WERE PROTECTING.



NOTHING...

NO, WAIT! THAT STATUE DOWN THERE. IT'S...



YEP. OUR OLD PAL--CHUCKLES! SOME COINCIDENCE, EH?

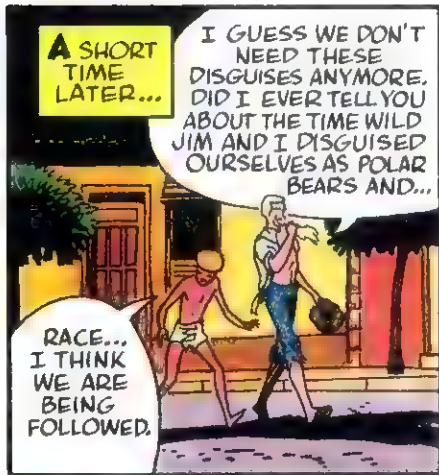


AND FRESH TIRE TRACKS! LOOKS LIKE WE FOUND WHAT WE CAME TO FIND!



LET'S GO
TELL THE
OTHERS.

I'VE GOT A
HELICOPTER
AT THE AIRFIELD,
AND I SAW A
LEVEL SPACE BACK
THERE WHERE WE
CAN LAND, COME
NIGHTFALL.



A SHORT
TIME
LATER...

I GUESS WE DON'T
NEED THESE
DISGUISES ANYMORE.
DID I EVER TELL YOU
ABOUT THE TIME WILD
JIM AND I DISGUISED
OURSELVES AS POLAR
BEARS AND...

RACE...
I THINK
WE ARE
BEING
FOLLOWED.

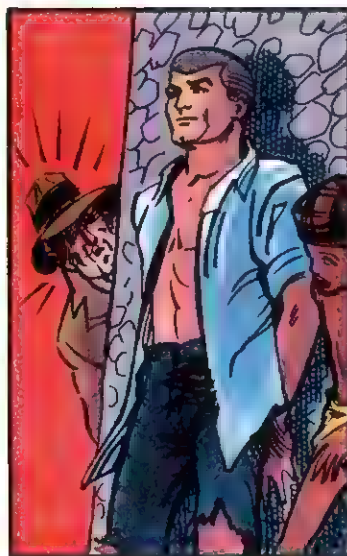


WHO?

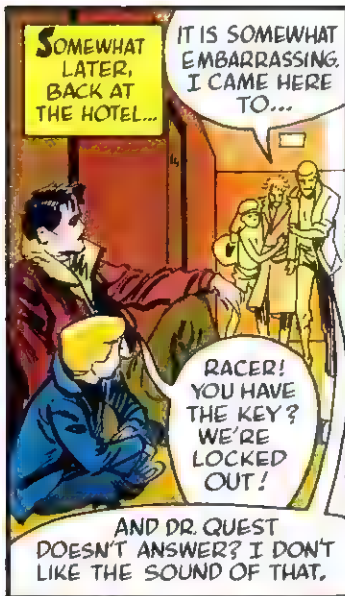
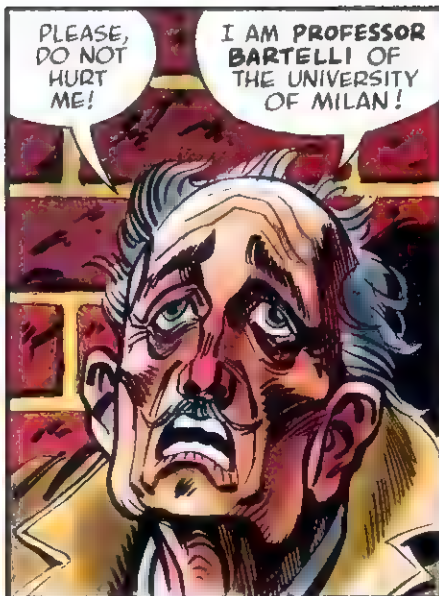
BACK THERE,
IN THE
TRENCHCOAT,
HE WAS WATCHING
US AT THE
MINISTRY.

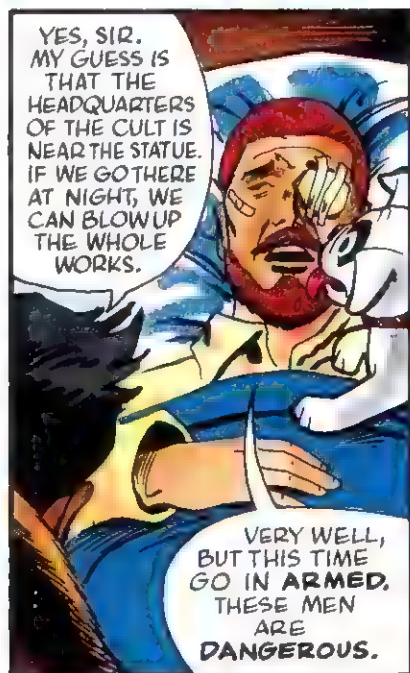
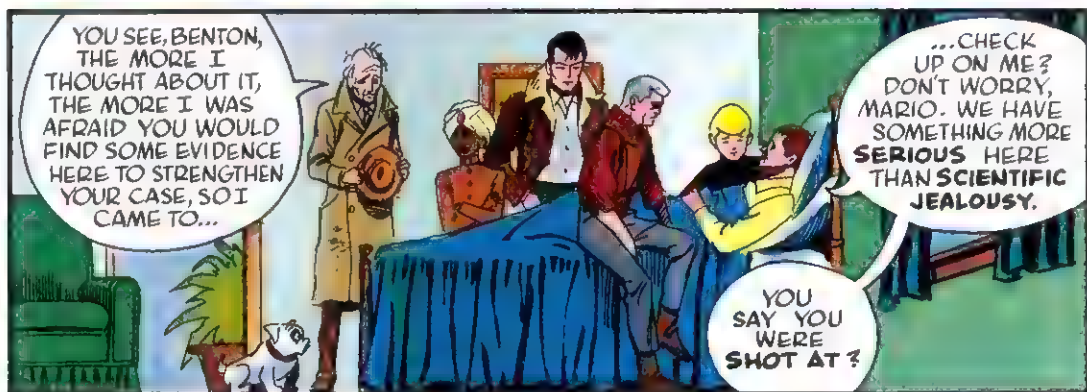
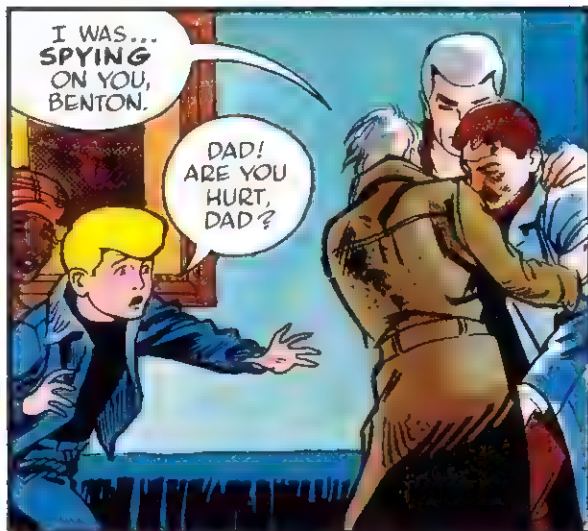


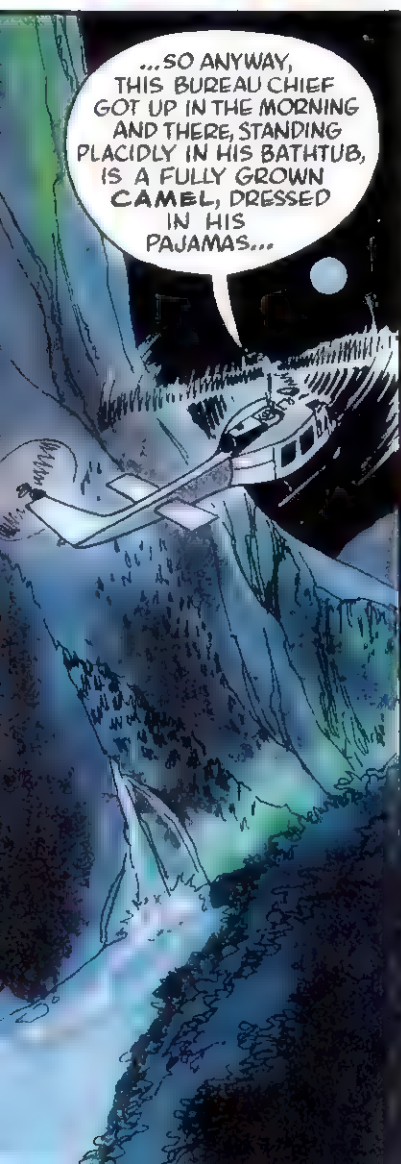
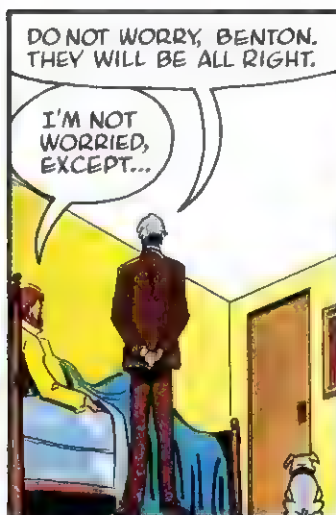
QUICK,
DOWN THIS
WAY!

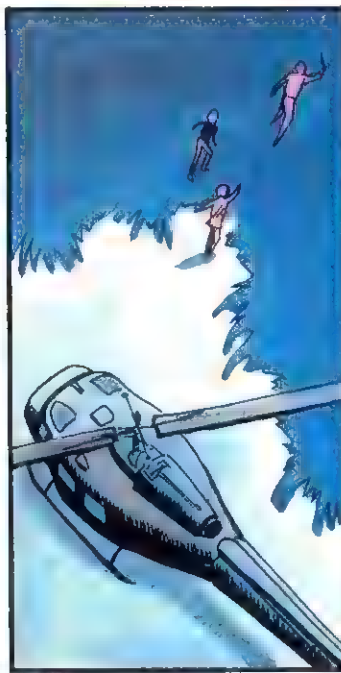
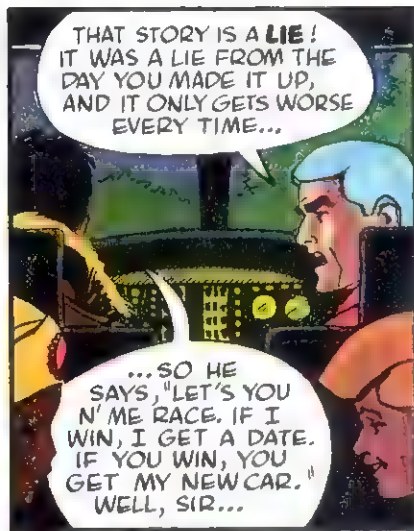
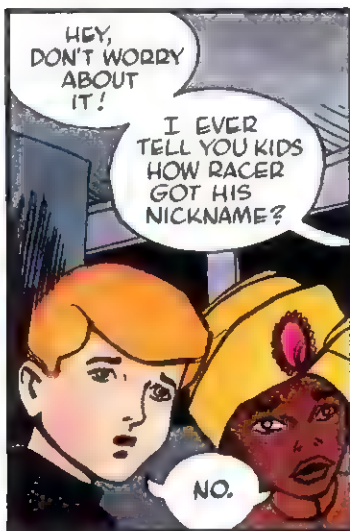


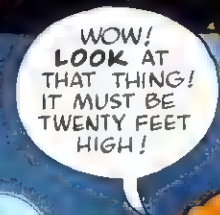
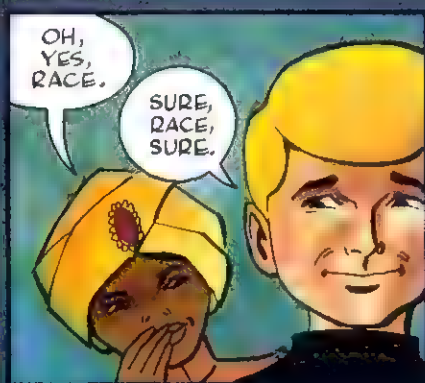
OKAY, BUSTER!
NOW **WHO**
ARE YOU AND
WHO DO YOU
WORK FOR?

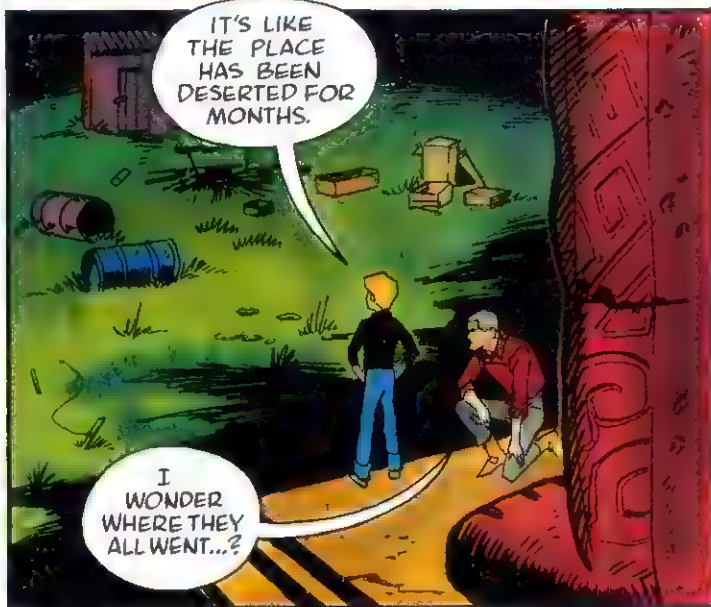
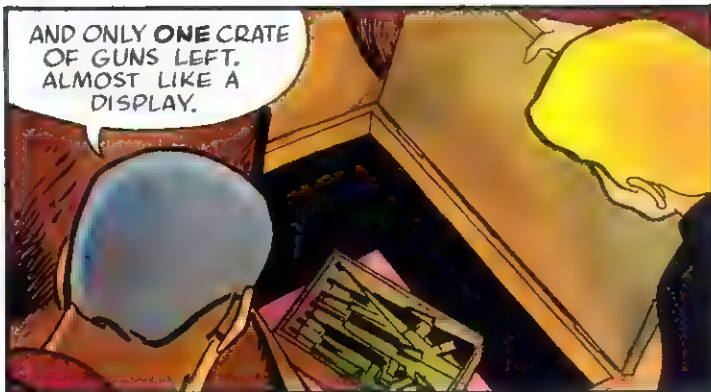














HE'S BEEN SHOT, AND NOT TOO LONG AGO.

THIS IS JUST TOO SIMPLE.



**RUN, HADJI!
GET OUT NOW!
IT'S A TRICK!**



AH, SEÑOR BANNON. SO YOU HAVE SEEN THROUGH MY LITTLE PLOY.

JUST AS WELL. IT WILL BE SO MUCH MORE **EFFECTIVE** WHEN YOUR BODIES ARE FOUND NEXT TO HIS.

COLONEL DIAZ!

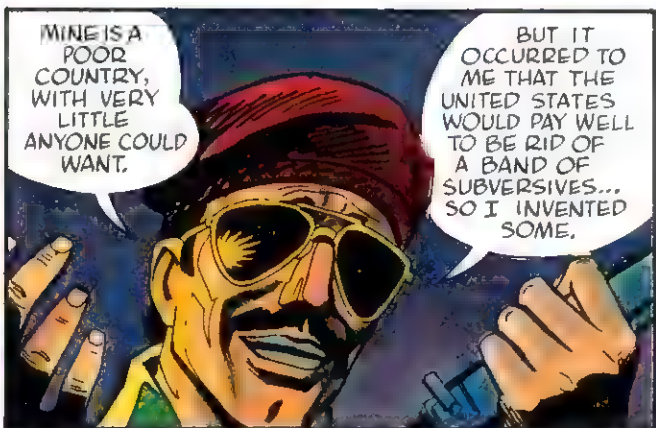


SHOT BY THE BRAVE NORTEAMERICANOS WHO SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES. SHOULD BE WORTH ANOTHER MILLION OR SO IN AID MONEY.



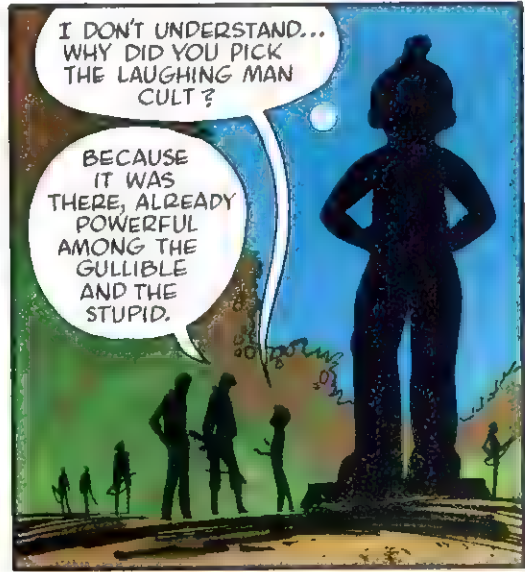
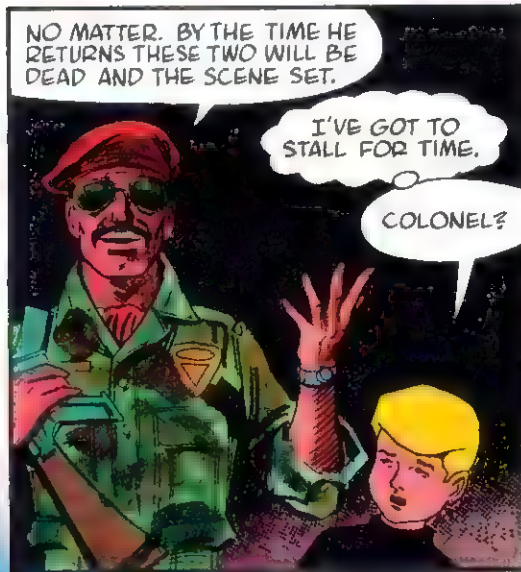
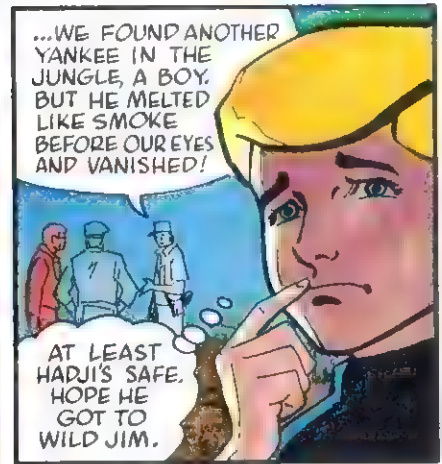
SO THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT...THE MILITARY AID. THERE NEVER WERE ANY TERRORISTS.

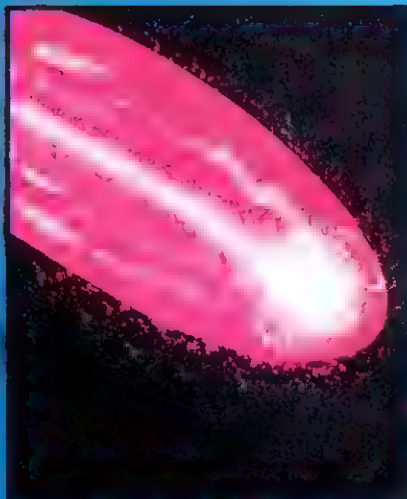
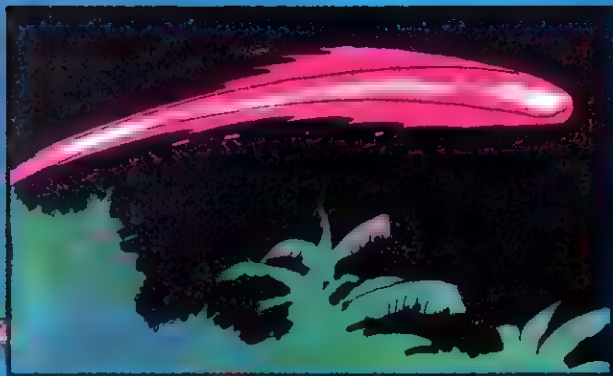
REGRETTABLY, NO.

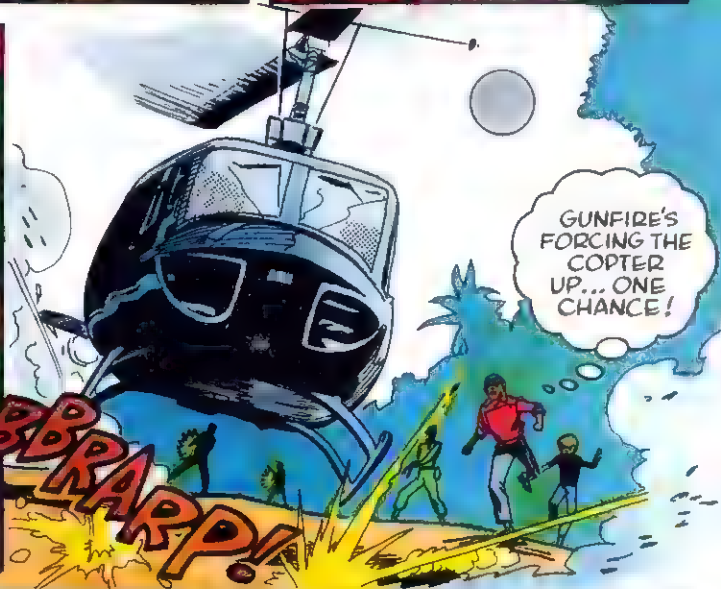


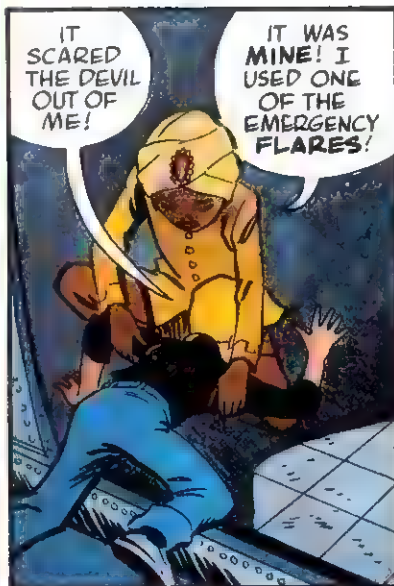
MINE IS A POOR COUNTRY, WITH VERY LITTLE ANYONE COULD WANT.

BUT IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD PAY WELL TO BE RID OF A BAND OF SUBVERSIVES... SO I INVENTED SOME.

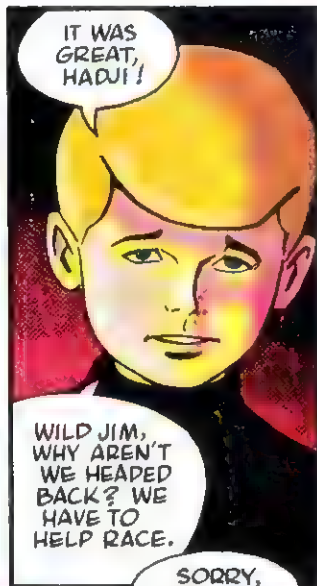








IT WAS MINE! I USED ONE OF THE EMERGENCY FLARES!



WILD JIM, WHY AREN'T WE HEADED BACK? WE HAVE TO HELP RACE.

SORRY, KID, NO CAN DO.



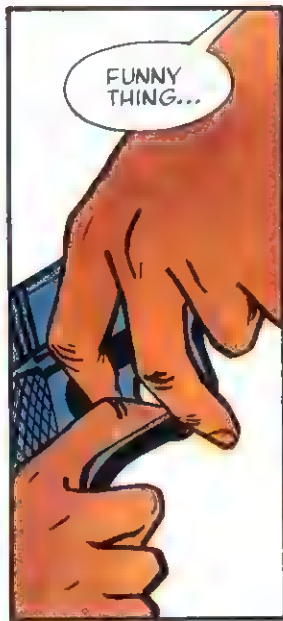
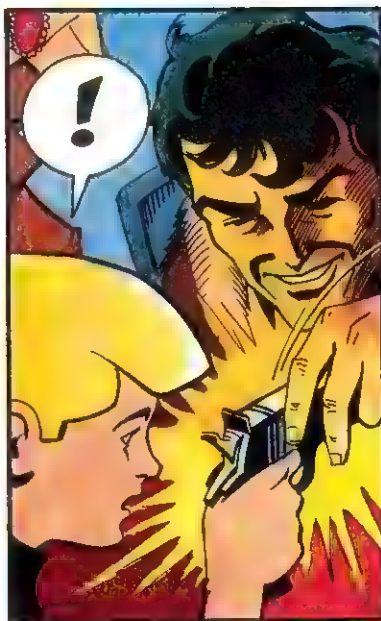
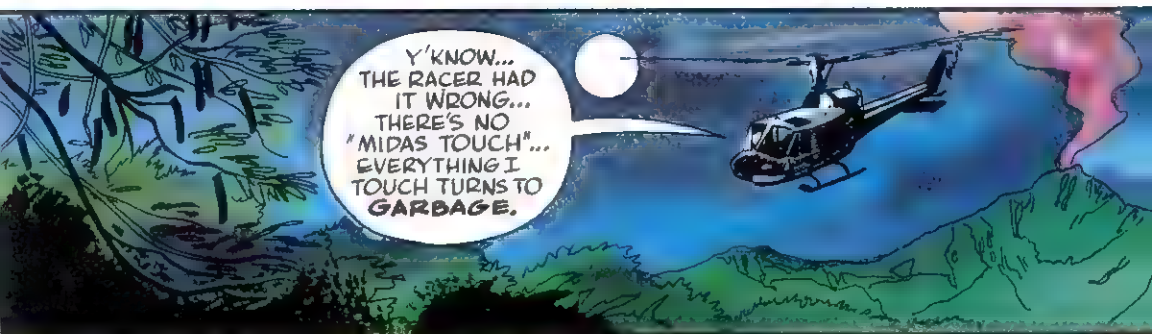
RACER WOULD UNDERSTAND. HE KNOWS THE RISKS AN AGENT TAKES.

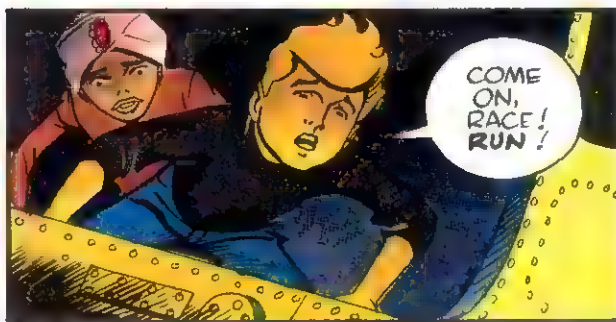
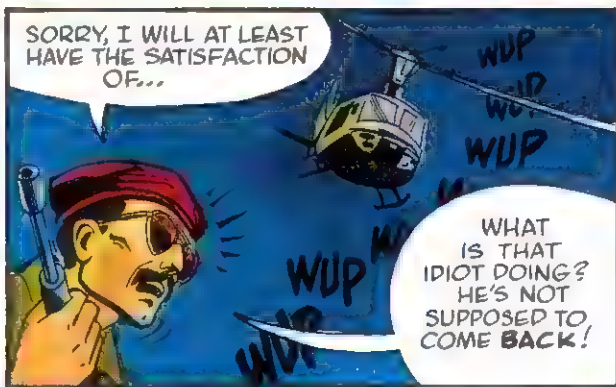
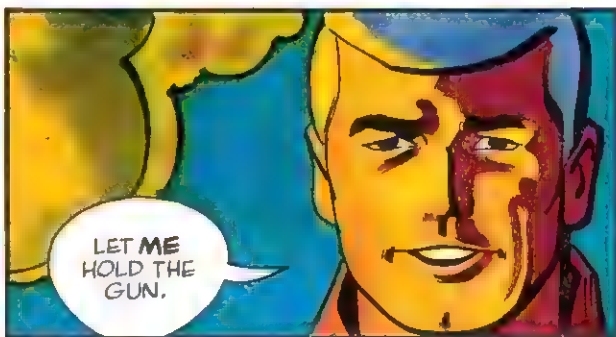
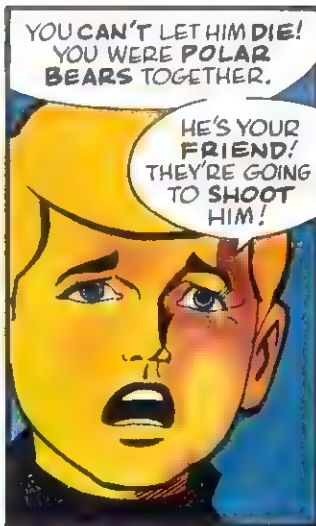
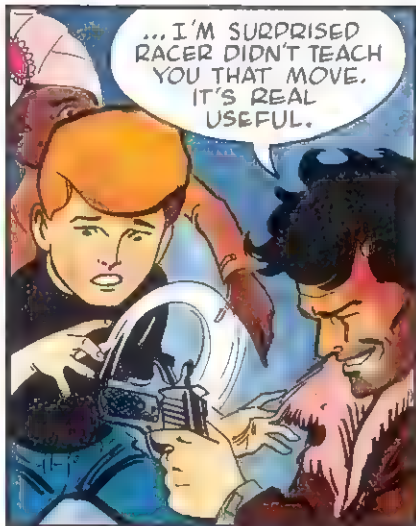


THIS IS WAR, AND IN A WAR...



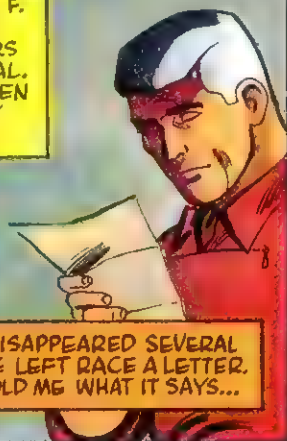
ALL'S FAIR. NOW TURN THIS SHIP AROUND.







FROM THE CASEBOOK OF BENTON F. QUEST... IT HAS BEEN A WEEK. NEARLY HALF THE ARMY OFFICERS WERE IMPLICATED IN THE SCANDAL. THE COUNTRY IS IN TURMOIL. WHEN WE LEAVE WE ARE ESCORTED BY U.S. MARINES...



"WILD JIM DISAPPEARED SEVERAL DAYS AGO. HE LEFT RACE A LETTER. HE HASN'T TOLD ME WHAT IT SAYS..."

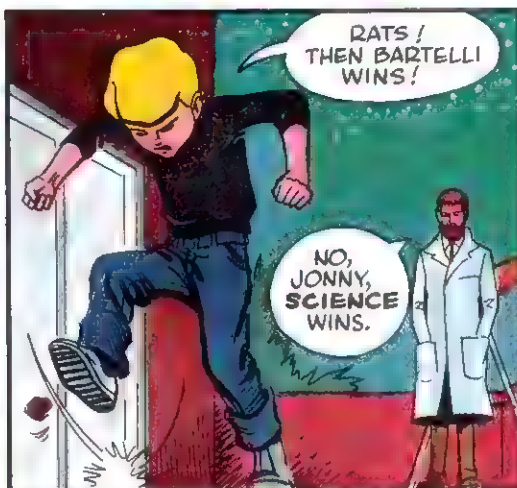


"...BUT I CAN GUESS."

"AS FOR ME, I LOOK FOR A COMET."

DAD... IT'S NOT GOING TO COME, IS IT?

I... I DON'T THINK SO, SON.

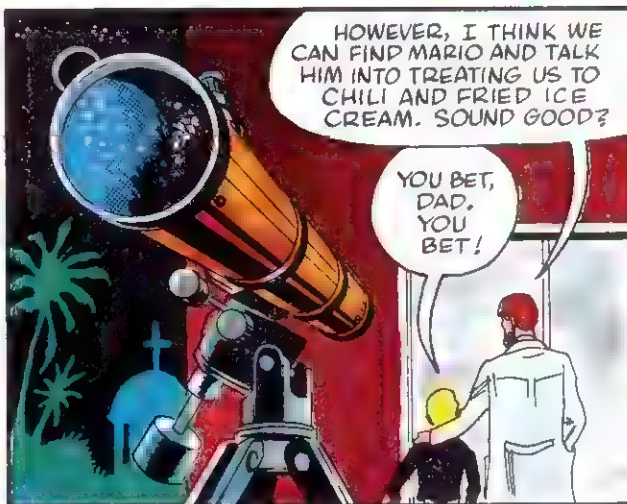


RATS! THEN BARTELLI WINS!

NO, JONNY, SCIENCE WINS.

SCIENCE IS... WHAT'S TRUE. IT'S MORE THAN TWO SCIENTISTS FIGHTING EACH OTHER.

AND AT OUR BEST, MARIO AND I REMEMBER THAT.



HOWEVER, I THINK WE CAN FIND MARIO AND TALK HIM INTO TREATING US TO CHILI AND FRIED ICE CREAM. SOUND GOOD?

YOU BET, DAD. YOU BET!



Questions and ANSWERS

1547 DeKALB STREET

NORRISTOWN, PA 19401

As we mentioned last issue, in order to get our JQ lettercol under way as soon as possible, we solicited the opinions of some of comicdom's most dedicated and outspoken readers. The following is just a small sampling of the avalanche of letters we received...

Dear Comico,

Besides putting out an entertaining comic, you folks had yet another difficult task of trying to recreate a feeling. Before reading JONNY QUEST #1, I knew Comico was capable of putting out an entertaining comic, but I really had to wonder if you could actually capture the "feel" of perhaps the greatest Saturday morning cartoon ever. I wasn't reading JQ very long when it happened. I began hearing the original voices in my head — voices I hadn't heard in well over a decade. It was then I knew Jonny Quest was back!

I won't tell you how young your first issue made me feel, but I was sorry to turn the last page and have those years come back. I've always wondered why the authorities keep allowing Dr. Quest to put his son in so many potentially dangerous situations. Even in your comic, it was okay with Jonny's dad to let him go exploring in an area filled with terrorists, or as Race called it, "a hotbed of political unrest!" On the other hand, if Dr. Quest wasn't a little loose with his son's safety, JQ would have been a boring cartoon and an even duller comic.

I'm glad to say it: your version of JQ was far from dull. The only thing I would have changed a little was the intro story. As the opening sequence of a new series, I think it should have done more to introduce the characters and their relationships to each other. It was never stated outright that Jonny was the son of Dr. Quest. Also, in the entire intro story, Dr. Quest was only called by his first name, "Benton," and was never once simply called "Dr. Quest," which I think most fans remember him by. I have to wonder how a person who has never seen the show would feel reading this story. Please don't get me wrong; it was a great story, but I do feel the intros could have been more.

Anyway, all things considered, you have done an excellent job with JQ. I thank you very much for the preview and wish you enormous success.

Thanks for listening,
Adam Burchess
Greenville, NC

—Thanks for writing, Adam, and special thanks to your wife, Miranda,

whose charming sketch of Bandit is proudly hanging in ye editor's office!

Dear Comico,

Thank you for the sneak peek at JONNY QUEST #1.

Undoubtedly, the feedback you receive on this series will attempt to compare it to the animated cartoon we all knew so well. While JONNY QUEST, the comic, can never deliver the exciting percussion and melody of the opening theme, Race's distinctive deep voice, or Bandit's sharp yaps at the signs of danger, the readers should view the comic on its own merits.

In which case, I believe you have another winner on your hands.

While your younger fans will find no element-based superheroes, no mutants, and no metamorphic robots, they will (hopefully) support JONNY QUEST because they will find something better: adventure, straight up, without fancy disguise. JONNY QUEST gives us an exciting world of mysteries and action hosted by a boy we all would have loved to have been.

But let's get specific. "The Sands of Khasa Tahid" read like a script from the cartoon. And this is how it should have been. Characterization was noticeably absent, but who needs it when we are wondering about the ancient city or if Hadji, Race, and Jonny will survive the desert? We were also introduced to an interesting cast, one of the most enjoyable being Reed C. James. Doug Wildey's portion of the book ended rather abruptly and I won't try to guess why. I just hope that he'll return soon.

In "City of Time Lost," Steve Rude captured the QUEST essence without burying his own style. William Messner-Loeb's script meshed perfectly with the art, giving the impression that these two have worked together before (and I don't believe they have).

The entire package of contributors indicates that many professionals were fans of JONNY QUEST. Whose renditions will we see in future issues?

Once again, thanks for reintroducing me to the world of JONNY QUEST. I can't wait to see it in living color!

Sincerely,
Carleton K. Brown
Springfield, MA

—Some of our upcoming contributors include Tom Yeates, Al Williamson, Dan Adkins, Mitch Schauer, John Nyberg, Bret Bevins, Adam Kubert, Dan Spiegler, Ken Steacy, and Brent Anderson. Just to name a few!

Dear Ms. Schutz,

Sorry I wasn't able to get off a LoC on the JUSTICE MACHINE stats, but I was busy in the extreme. Just as well, I didn't care for it.

JONNY QUEST, though. Now this is something. I put in my order as soon as I heard about it.

I don't remember many specifics about the TV show as originally run. Alas, I was a kid. But I do remember the general feel and that I liked it. It was something special, something different. And I even have the Gold Key JONNY QUEST #1, which I must dig out one day.

Now, how the blue bloody blazes do I fill this letter with praise and/or raps based on the stats in hand and *not* enthusiastic anticipation? Well, I can try.

The first page starts off with a bang—even though all they do is talk. Just look Political unrest *and* a buried lost city. Yes, this is a JONNY QUEST story. And Doug Wildey stepped right back into the characters just like he'd never left them. I could actually *hear* the voices of the actors as I was reading. The stories moved smoothly and quickly without being loaded down with gloom, tragedy and pathos, unlike certain *other* books I could mention. At the same time, the stories were intelligently done. Not childish at all.

The art is high quality but straightforward, not artsy-fartsy or stylized to death. The art actually follows the TV animation very closely, which was some of the best of that time and compares even better to a lot of the stuff today.

There was a minimum of expository dialogue. You know, theories about time/space or stories about Race's past ad nauseam. One thing left me lost, though. It seemed like Capt. Cardon thought that he had traveled through time—not lived 170 years. Which was it, or are we supposed to not know?

Well, I guess that's about it. Relatively succinct praise and one piddlin' little gripe. I think you've got a winner. (Then again, I liked THRILLER. And MARS. And CAPTAIN CARROT.)

One last thing: Do some text pages on the TV show. A list of episodes would be welcome, with plot synopses if you've got room. Tell us about the voice actors. (I have no idea who they were.) Tell us everything.

Best of luck, and welcome back.

John Henry Sain
Medford, OR

—As a MARS fan, we're certain you've enjoyed Wheatley and Hempel's out-

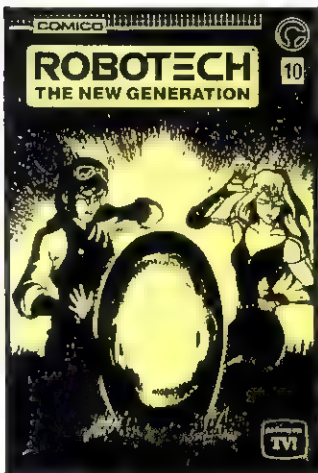
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HYPE PAGE

Coming from COMICO . . .

In September—

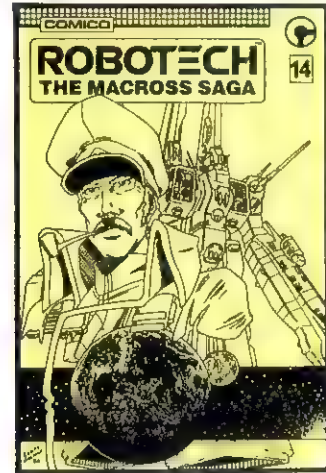
ROBOTECH The New Generation #10: The Invid introduce a "simulagent" into the unsuspecting ranks of our intrepid freedom fighters, but this alien spy bears a striking resemblance to someone from Scott's tortured past! **Mark Burbey** scripts, **Reggie Byers** pencils, and **Tom Poston** inks. Painted cover by **Dave Dorman**.



JONNY QUEST #4: A movie producer hires Dr. Quest and Race to find out who is sabotaging his film production about the discovery of a living triceratops! Meanwhile, Race finds himself up against one of the most impossible characters of his career: Marley Frost, movie star! Written with style and wit by **William Messner-Loebs**, lavishly pencilled by **Tom Yeates**, and exquisitely inked by **Dan Adkins**. Wraparound cover by **Tom Yeates** and **Al Williamson**.



ROBOTECH The Macross Saga #14: Back on Earth after many months in deep space, Commander Gfival allows himself a few private moments to digest the turbulent events of the past two years, bracing himself once more for the interminable struggle against the Zentraedi invaders! "Gfival's Report" is scripted by **Jack Herman**, pencilled by **Mike Leeke**, and inked by **Keith Wilson**.



ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Bob Schreck Director of Public Relations
Diana Schutz Editor-in-Chief
Gerry Giovino Publisher/Art Director
Dennis Lasorda P.T. Publisher/Finance Director
Phil Lasorda Publisher/Business Director

There is something profoundly inspiring about the display of creativity, particularly in the form of entertainment, that compels one to want to participate. Evidence of this arrives everyday with the morning mail in the form of unsolicited submissions from artists and writers looking to break into the comics business. What some of them don't seem to realize, however, is that comics publishing is no less a professional arena than film or television, and that there are various do's and don'ts attendant to making a presentation.

While submissions to Comico are generally looked over by **Diana**

Schutz and **Gerry Giovino**, it is my duty to respond to each and every one of them, offering objective advice or asking the individual to submit something in particular. Something I never fully realized until I was the one sitting behind the desk, however, is that your average editorial staff has very little time to devote to submissions. We're doing well just to get the books out on time! This is why it is very important that anyone submitting their work adhere to a specific set of guidelines that would seem to apply industry-wide.

- Writers should limit their submissions to a maximum of five double-

COMICO CHECKLIST #4: Beyond the Hype Page, beyond ads and announcements, beyond your wildest dreams, the fourth issue of our exclusive and collectable checklist keeps you abreast of all the exciting happenings that are coming only from Comico! Before missing a single thrill, put this four-color newsletter at the top of your must-have list!

spaced typed pages. **Never** send full scripts. If we like your plot synopsis, we will then request to see a script. You may include artwork if you wish, but it's not required.

- Artists are not limited to the number of pages they may submit, but we ask that they **never** send originals (good photocopies will suffice), and send only what represents their **best** work. Be as objective about your work as possible. We receive a great many portfolios lacking even the rudimentary elements of proficient artwork.

- Always include a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE) with

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Shipping in October—

GRENDEL #1: The past is a memory and the present is tomorrow. Grendel has died and Grendel lives. Hunter Rose is succeeded by Christine Spar, and things are about to become very unpleasant. This disturbing tale of modern suspense is written by **Matt Wagner** and uniquely illustrated by the new team of **Arnold and Jacob Pander**, with **Jay Geldhof** on inks.

ROBOTECH Masters #11: Zor is held prisoner and subjected to tests to determine his genetic origin, but Daria won't be satisfied until she makes him pay for all the death and destruction he's caused. Lt. Sterling gets a little help from her friends in "Déjà Vu." Script by **Mike Baron**, layouts by **Nell Vokes**, pencil finishes by **Sam Kieth**, and inks by **Keith Wilson**.



ELEMENTALS TM and © 1986 Bill Willingham

ELEMENTALS #10: Everyone knows it's impolite to hit a woman, but when that woman is Morningstar and she and her fellow Elementals are targeted for death by a ruthless assassin known as Sanction, "The Bullet Hits the Bone!" Plotted and pencilled by **Bill Willingham**, scripted by **Jack Herman**, and inked by **Rich Rankin**.

ROBOTECH The New Generation #11: Scott Bernard and company come upon a thriving community that is migrating to a Utopia just beyond the mountains, but conditions soon turn out to be less than idyllic. Meanwhile, Lancer visits an old flame. Romance and intrigue abound! **Jack Herman** scripts, **Reggie Byers** pencils, and **Tom Poston** inks, with a full color cover painted by **Dave Dorman**.



JONNY QUEST TM and © 1986 Hanna-Barbara Productions, Inc.

JONNY QUEST #5: When Jezebel Jade summons Race Bannon for help, Jonny and Hadji rush to her aid in his absence, only to find themselves face to face with the insidious Dr. Zin! Written by **William Messner-Loebs**, pencilled by **Mitch Schauer**, and inked by **John Nyberg**. Cover by **Dave Stevens**!

GRENDEL Graphic Novel: Witness Grendel—genius, novelist, assassin—the enigmatic figure whose only true opponent was fate and whose viciousness knew no limits. Collected for the first time in a single volume, this tale of deceit, destiny, and the supernatural is stylishly written, pencilled, and colored by **MAGE** creator **Matt Wagner**, with inks by **Rich Rankin**. Introduction by **Alan Moore**. Pin-up gallery featuring art by **Steve Rude**, **John Totleben**, **Steve Bissette**, and more!

adequate postage so that we may return your package or otherwise contact you. Considering the time and expense involved in evaluating and processing submissions, our budget does not allow us to return the many packages we receive each day.

- Writers and artists should include their name, address, and telephone number somewhere on the front or back of each page in order to facilitate the process.

- Allow at least six weeks to receive a reply. While we devote sincere attention to every submission, they must unfortunately be a low

priority item with regard to our daily schedule. You may telephone the office to request a copy of our guidelines, but it does you no good whatsoever to badger us for a response to your submission. In fact, it can only work against you. Politeness and patience are vital aspects of professionalism.

- Letterers and colorists are also welcome to submit samples, and they should follow the guidelines for artists.

Finally, please be aware that while we are always interested in seeing new talent, we only publish a certain number of titles and can only offer a

certain amount of work. Bearing that in mind, however, every time we open an unsolicited submission, the aficionado in us quietly hopes to be dazzled by something amazing and as yet unseen. You may be the next **Alan Moore** or **Frank Miller** and not even know it.

Let us see what you can do, but be professional and correct about it, and good luck!

SUBMISSIONS EDITOR

BLIMP THE COMICO BLIMP

ing this issue. And as to text pages on the TV show, check out issue #95 of *Amazing Heroes*. It's a special all-JONNY QUEST issue which answers all your questions. Just send a check for \$3.00 to:

Amazing Heroes
Subscription Department
4359 Cornell Rd.
Agoura, CA 91301

Dear Editor in Chief Schutz,

Please allow me to begin this missive with a thanks to you for doing me the honor of sending me an advance copy of the new comic title, JONNY QUEST #1, to review.

Overall the artists involved in this issue contributed crisp, clear, clean work which was enjoyable to view. Doug Wildey's cover was excellent in that it effectively suggested promises of high adventure, fierce reality, fast action, and exotic locations. These elements are extremely necessary for readers, at a glance, to be convinced that this is not just a "kiddie" book based upon a saccharine Saturday morning cartoon show. Doug Wildey, in the lead story, and the team of Steve Rude/Mike Royer, in the second feature, demonstrated skill with scenery and background detail, and also did a fine job of making Jonny and Hadji look like young boys, rather than merely short adults. I personally preferred the Doug Wildey character illustrations. However, I thought Rude and Royer did a superb job with the mad Frenchman they illustrated. At times the characters seemed to lack facial detail necessary for conveying mood, emotion, and character. Race Bannon should be muscled-up to better reflect his more physical role, and to further vary the body types utilized. All of the adults looked a bit too uniform in their design. Jade should have been rendered in a more sensual manner. My biggest criticism was with Bandit. He is a cute ally, but he was too cartoonish. Older readers will turn off to an overly cartoonish animal ally (à la Krypto, Bleep, etc.). Bandit can be an asset to the book if he is rendered a shade more realistically.

The highlights of the Doug Wildey and William Messner-Loebs stories were the smooth storytelling, the believable dialogue, and the natural character exchanges. I was pleased to see that often redundant narrative filler was wisely avoided. The educational asides were also an added plus. However, characterization could have been broader. I hope that as the series progresses, the main cast members' personalities will be deeply explored and meaningfully expanded. Mature readers will not be attracted to one-dimensional or very limited characters. The second story contained two other major flaws. Mr. Messner-Loebs' Napoleonic Frenchman and Arab goons, who all just happened to speak flawless English, were a tad ridiculous. This linguistic credibility strain could have been easily avoided by explaining that Jonny spoke French, and that Dr. Quest spoke Arabic. It is only reasonable that most of the Quest crew would be multilingual. I was also put off by Messner-Loebs' "Minutes later . . ." ending. The weak conclusion play made the story appear rushed and incomplete. More mature readers would

have been better satisfied had a few panels been devoted to actually showing the Quest company overpower the baddies. The more acceptable ending of the lead tale made it much more satisfying.

Characterization is paramount to success in a modern day comic publication. As a new title, JONNY QUEST has much to offer. Jonny and Hadji are likable and, by their mere ages and natures, will attract young readers. This is good in itself, but if older readers are to be equally drawn to the book, the depth of the characters must be increased. Jonny and Hadji should be presented as exceptional juveniles, but not in an extremely juvenile manner. Do not make the kids more capable than their adult counterparts, nor portray them as dependents who always need saving. The youngsters should represent an entertaining mixture of vulnerability, capability, and daring.

Dr. Quest was well portrayed as the supreme intellectual. He should be seen as a genius's genius, but his physical prowess should not be overlooked. His adventurous lifestyle dictates that he possess a fair share of physical abilities and training. It would be interesting to learn the details behind his educational history, financial portfolio, and the loss of his wife.

Race Bannon would best be presented as a composite of James Bond (cool, intelligent, skilled, charming, crafty, debonaire, worldly) and Rambo (tough, deadly if need be, master combatant, loyal, determined, capable of possible but amazing feats, superbly trained). Race more than any other Quest character reflects the gritty and grim reality that is often a part of the Quest expeditions and situations. The presentation of these elements will enhance the enjoyment for older readers. Race's background (training, joining of the Quest team) would make for intriguing stories or featurettes.

Jade's role as the exciting, exotic, roguish female interest should be played to the hilt. Her sensuality and mystique will be appreciated by older fans. She should remain a fairly mysterious and enigmatic person to better preserve her unique contribution to the cast.

This title will experience great success if its direction addresses both new, younger readers, as well as older, more mature fans who have outgrown cartoons. Few comics survive for very long if they are aimed too obviously at kid readers. The JQ offerings need not reek with blood, but realism should be employed to enhance the danger, adventure, and action of each story. This will attract new older readers who were once young JQ fans. Deeper characterization and upgraded plots will also serve to effectively expand the title's audience age range of appeal.

Again, I thank you for your honored solicitation of my comments, and for your kind time in reading them. I wish you and JQ much success.

Yours in fandom,
Wallace Lee Hopkins
Glen Carbon, IL

—Sorry to have trimmed your letter a tad, Wallace, but we had to save some room for other people's letters! What with the death of Jonny's mother last

ish and a few more insights into Race Bannon's background this ish, I guess you can tell that we were already anticipating the need for more in-depth characterization in the comic book version of JONNY QUEST. And it doesn't stop here, by any means! For instance, issue #5 features Jezebel Jade in a starring role as Bill Loebs, Mitch Schauer, and John Nyberg travel to Hong Kong (along with Jonny and Hadji, of course!) for a tale aptly entitled "Jade Incorporated."

Dear Comico,

Thank you for the advance photocopy of the first issue of JONNY QUEST. This is one of the boldest, most intelligent moves in current day comic publishing. I can totally appreciate a JONNY QUEST comic, as it is a comic, but like the great Warner Brothers cartoons of the fifties and sixties, it doesn't insult your intelligence, but rather, demands it. The days of cartoons providing entertainment as well as sophistication are long past, unfortunately; I applaud the effort you have made here.

The first few pages were like a trip back in time; they were every bit as flawless and captured the mood of the old series perfectly. The rest of the book also pursued this lead; I think that maybe the ending should have been elaborated on a bit—it sort of wrapped up too quickly, going from Jonny and the rest being stranded in the desert to their timely rescue a page or so later. But regardless, it was a welcome relief to read nevertheless. Doug Wildey is in top form, using his perspective anglework, and thorough knowledge of good cartooning throughout the story.

The second feature was sound also, but I prefer Wildey's art to anyone else's in a setting such as this. Doug was meant to do Jonny, no one else. I would suggest keeping many of the "fan favorite" type of artists out of these pages. Jonny's look is perfectly drawn from the talent of Doug Wildey. Anything else would make the book another in a long line of inane, growing increasingly so, commercial, overly violent, sullen, unhappy comics. The problem in part with today's creators is that they've forgotten the roots. They forgot how to laugh, and what is smart, and what isn't. Never underestimate the intelligence of the viewership; always, if anything, assume they are more intelligent than perhaps they actually are. Eventually they will catch up and you'll have another golden age.

Very good book; keep it in the spirit of the original series.

Mark Waldman
Northridge, CA

—Hopefully, Mark, our ever-changing roster of talented artists won't turn you—or anyone else—off to JONNY QUEST. Every issue so far has been a genuine labor of love for each of the various art teams involved—and how can you go wrong with something that sincere?

Be with us next issue as Tom Yeates does what he does best—do I really have to tell ya? I never thought I'd say this, but . . . See ya in 30!

—Diana Schutz

JONNY Quest™

Comico The Comic Company invites you to join William Messner-Loebs, Tom Yeates, and Dan Adkins as they bring to life one hell of a story in JONNY QUEST #4.



JONNY QUEST™ and © 1986 Hanna-Barbera Productions, Inc.

**Cover art by Tom Yeates and
Al Williamson!**

ON SALE IN SEPTEMBER

